UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE UPDATE

Summary of Stakeholder Interviews And Public Meetings

Prepared for The City of Greensboro, North Carolina

April 2005

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Introduction

The Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) rewrite process was initiated in 2004 to update and improve City building and land use regulations that hinder desirable development. The current phase of the project involves evaluating the City's existing approach to regulating development, and formulating alternative strategies that would better achieve the City's development objectives, consistent with City policies and applicable requirements of state and federal law.

On April 5, 6, and 7, 2005 the consultant team spoke with over 100 individuals in approximately 20 stakeholder interview sessions. This was complimented by three public workshops/open houses with over 50 attendees held on April 7, 12, and 14 in various locations around the City. The stakeholder interview groups were organized by area of involvement with the development regulations. Some groups, such as City staff or representatives of the development community use the regulations on a daily basis and may have a different set of priorities than others who use the regulations less frequently, such as neighborhood groups or non-profit organizations, but are just as impacted by the content of the ordinance (see the Appendix for a complete list of stakeholder groups).

This paper provides a summary of these discussions. Key comments and issues are organized by topic, starting with overarching comments about zoning and the City's planning process and then proceeding to specific aspects of zoning, subdivision, and other regulations affecting land development in the City. Comments in *italics* are taken directly from the interview sessions. This is followed by a complete listing of all the comments heard during these sessions. It is important to point out that these comments represent the opinions and perspectives of the person(s) making the comment. Essentially, the statements embody how a person perceives the land development process in and around Greensboro. Due to the open format of the discussions, there are comments that may not correspond directly to the UDO rewrite effort, but should be presented as they convey the concerns and interests of the Greensboro community.

The consultant team will incorporate these valuable insights into its other work tasks as it analyzes the issues, considers alternatives, and develops possible strategies for revising the City's regulatory framework.

Key Recommendations

This section contains samples of some of the comments that were raised consistently throughout the various stakeholder sessions. These could be considered the priority issues felt by everyday users of the current ordinance. It is obvious that there is a great deal of excitement about many of the goals, policies, and suggestions of the Greensboro Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan, but there are also some reservations.

Overall Philosophy and Approach

We heard a number of comments that, while not specific to the development standards or procedures, provide a context for the LDO update process. Many of these comments extend beyond the scope of this ordinance update project to more systemic issues involving the City's philosophy on growth and change over the upcoming years.

- Sense that the current mentality is 1960s Greensboro, not 2005. Council and staff don't understand that Greensboro is changing and growing.
- Reflecting principles of "New Urbanism" is desirable, where it can apply, but it should be adapted to Greensboro.
- Want to see equal distribution of development across the City.
- Make sure urban stays urban/Rural stays rural less suburban.
- Concerned about displacement of people in general/gentrification.
- Is single-family housing within the older parts of the City even a priority?
- Anticipate transportation needs and services.
- Want integration of transportation plan/solutions and ordinance.

The recently adopted Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan was mentioned repeatedly. Future land use, mixed-use, pedestrianism, and connectivity are but a few of the policies covered in the Comprehensive Plan. There was mixed reaction to some of these ideas, with some participants expressing confusion about what the Plan actually intends.

Important to go back and look at Connections 2025 overall—it's not just a land use diagram.

- Make sure that the ultimate regulations implement the Comprehensive Plan.
- Timing is not right for all the comp plan at this time
- Utility extension policy needs to be tied to the comp plan, not independent of it.
- The LDO should identify what facilities will be available in Tier 1, 2, 3.

Public Participation

We heard many comments regarding the need for public participation. These can be generally classified into two areas: Maintaining public input and two-way communication in the update of the land development regulations; and the need for more public notification and participation in the land development process in general. Many emphasized the need for neighborhood input on matters related to rezoning of properties and infill projects in the vicinity of existing residential neighborhoods.

Typical comments regarding the ordinance revision process include:

- Ordinance revisions should be citizen-driven.
- Needs to be a process for implementing plans. Public participation is crucial in implementing the plans.

The following comment from the Neighborhood Groups meeting is typical of the sentiment among citizens regarding the rezoning process:

- Citizens are at a disadvantage during a rezoning case. They find out about it too late. Require a neighborhood workshop EARLY ON for any rezoning in a neighborhood ("Meet and Confer"). Good faith effort to develop consensus early enough in the process so that the neighborhood can assess the proposed plan/project.
- Good public participation process however need to have a more formal neighborhood workshop requirement before rezoning.

Document Usability

We heard many comments from everyday users of the document- staff, developers, architects, and engineers about problems with the current ordinance. These ranged from the very general...

- The current code resists development.
- City is not making it easy to do the right thing
- The ordinance doesn't work together. Different parts conflict (and conflicting interpretations).
- Navigating the system is difficult unless you know the system. Need an advocate or ombudsman to help small applicants through the process. Makes it too expensive for the small-time business/developer. Sense that you need an attorney to make it through.
- Outside developers/engineers haven't figured out how to navigate- the inside engineers have already figures out the system. Make it fair and clear for everyone.
- Make the rules clear.
- Clear guidance for citizens (average user) in using the new ordinance.

To the specific...

- Sidewalk policy isn't in Chapter 30 (UDO).
- Need a development manual for applicants.
- Street addressing policy is in the appendix of the ordinance-people don't know about it.

Review Process

Many took advantage of the stakeholder interview sessions to make suggestions for improving the application review process. Comments were heard about both the general review process and the Technical Review Committee (TRC).

Many in the development community (and some staff members) commented on the length of time approvals take...

- The City's architectural review process is too slow-multiple layers of bureaucracy results in conflicting and tedious review.
- Like the fast-track permitting system available in Charlotte (30 days). Need to explore this further. Chapel Hill too restrictive on the other hand.
- Too many delays (TIA, Plan amendment, etc.) compress process. Developers don't mind paying more for faster review.
- Shared review process needs to be timely- and comprehensive. Multiple reviews currently requiredslows things down.
- The appeals process should take no more than 45 days, max.
- Recombination of lots- developer is exempt from subdivision requirements provided each of the
 existing lots meet district requirements. Look at expedited review process for these minor
 subdivisions that allows city to get the maintenance easements, etc.

We heard many comments about the TRC, pointing out strengths...

- Subdivisions work pretty well under current TRC review process. Almost everything resolved during the TRC review process.
- Nice to see everything from the TRC review in one document.
- A positive feature is that one can submit plans for TRC on any day of the week, and the review clock starts from that point.

Weaknesses...

- TRC process isn't working; too much detail at beginning of project; too time-consuming—14 sets of comments
- There are contradictory department findings in the TRC process, and no "advocate" for the application who would seek to mediate differences.
- TRC does not facilitate or negotiate to make a better project. It is a filter, or gate-keeper format, not a problem-solving experience.

And suggestions...

- In TRC, staff IS responsive, but there are too many staff comments, in several iterations.
- Ideally want to have more information up front (for TRC).
- Need to clarify that building permit application and TRC application can happen concurrently-however building permit approval can be given only after TRC approval.
- Construction plan approval should remain after TRC approval.

Zoning Districts

We heard a number of comments directly related to the zoning districts in the current ordinance. With very few exceptions, there was widespread support for consolidating the number of zoning districts and allowing a broader range of uses within each district based on *performance* measures, such as buffering and setback requirements, density, traffic generation, or neighborhood compatibility rather than maintaining strict segregation of uses into many distinct districts. It is important to note that representatives from the neighborhood organizations generally supported district consolidation as well, provided appropriate measures are included to protect existing neighborhoods and compatibility is maintained.

- Number of zoning classifications—too many—consolidate into fewer with flexibility.
- Consolidate zoning districts. More density driven rather than use driven.

We heard about frustration with overlay districts as currently configured. It seems that the way the overlay standards are integrated with the base district standards is awkward.

- Overlay districts: "Hate them." e.g East Market Street Overlay.
- Don't like Overlays—too many players—too confusing.

Infill Development

The Plan identifies three development tiers in Greensboro, increasing in intensity from the relatively rural perimeter to the denser urban core. Participants seemed to agree that increased density in the center of town.

- Regulations should encourage reuse of downtown buildings- reduced requirements (such as setback and parking).
- Reuse of downtown
- Much support for infill
- Police tends to support most infill
- Allow some lot splits to allow infill redevelopment of existing lots based on compatibility and the existing context.

However, there was also concern about the impact of this intensification on existing/established residential neighborhoods.

- Design standards for 'intensification' in residential neighborhoods. Require sidewalks.
- Want more options to control what happens in a neighborhood. Currently, it's either all (historic district) or nothing- consider Neighborhood Conservation Districts.
- Infill on vacant lots within an established residential neighborhood is an issue: These need to be compatible with the context.

Mixed-Use Development

Generally, there is wide-spread support for the concept of mixed use...

- "Good city is like a good pizza"-a little bit of everything everywhere. Want to see a more richly integrated community.
- Mixed use should be a first-choice, not a last-choice. Incentivize.
- Want transit-oriented mixed use development.
- Different MU zone categories are needed that relate to context.
- Mixed use development in neighborhoods, which can provide local services (groceries) are also good for walking, and reduce air pollution because of reduced vehicle miles traveled.
- More mixed-use developments. Appropriate mixed-use should have: Schools, commercial, residential amenities for residential. Should not have industrial uses.

Although it appears that there is confusion of what this actually means...

What we really need to do is explore what "mixed-use" means; interpreting what the MU blobs mean.

- Mixed Use: "What does it mean?" Horizontal, vs. vertical, phased, ground floor limits, etc. Can you do an all-commercial project in a MU area? (Are the MU zones actually codified, or is the generalized land use map from the comp plan being applied?)
- Confusion over what mixed-use means—is it a mandate? Or an accommodation?
- The definition of mixed use needs clarity: Must it be vertical? Can it be horizontal? Why prohibit residential on the first floor?

And there is also frustration with the approach the City is perceived to be taking...

- Mixed use regulations are unduly complex.
- Requirement for vertical mixed-use isn't working and is a ticking time bomb
- Neighbors fight mixed-use and densification
- Had to build \$1M wall to protect residential then required to do residential within the project
- "We're not Raleigh," in terms of market acceptance of mixed use.
- Be careful about forcing mixed-use on all areas. May result in nothing happening.
- Mixed-use needs to be market driven; not formula-driven

Incentives

Many spoke about the effectiveness of incentives for encouraging desired development. A few raised specific ideas for what sorts of incentives are actually worthwhile:

- Meaningful incentives for superior development (or Mixed-Use) would be: reduced fees, shorter review time, more flexibility in compliance with standards.
- "Incentives" are sprinkled throughout the comprehensive plan—needs to be be substantial give and take
- Incentives are need for affordable housing, such as: density bonus; permitting some smaller lots mixed in with others; permitting some houses to be constructed without providing parking on site. (Raises question about availability of on-street parking, and policies that may limit on-street parking.)

Flexibility

Flexibility in the ordinance standards and interpretation was mentioned repeatedly. Some had specific areas where more flexible standards are required, such as set backs in certain districts. Others spoke to a need for more administrative flexibility in staff interpretation of the standards.

- Can you do a duplex in the single family district "by right," or a least with some specific conditions, perhaps large houses, or corner lots, or neighborhood edges?
- The code provides no lee-way for differing conditions.
- Form-based approach might work. More emphasis on design and place rather than use.
- Flexibility to encourage rehabilitation of existing buildings.
- Flexibility in dimension requirements. Trouble accommodating neighborhood commercial. NB district is a failure. Look at Walker and Elam (success). Allow parking on the side (only on the rear now). Now, every building must be set back 20'. Too big a setback...
- Current parking ordinance gives staff some administrative flexibility in making decisions. Use this as an example for revising other review procedures.

Parks, Greenways, and Open Space

The importance of open space and greenways was a common refrain throughout the interview sessions. While many started with the general comment "Greensboro needs more green space" or similar, further discussion led to specific suggestions that can be incorporated into the revision process.

- Provide access to pedestrian trails along greenways from residential developments.
- Connections of trails, alternatives, trade-offs should be defined.
- Preservation of open space in rural areas important.
- Reservation of open space: incentives are needed for doing this, such as density, set-backs, clustering, parking reduction, narrower street widths.
- Want to see the open space component of the comp plan incorporated into the LDO. Greenways are one of the defining characteristics of the City.
- Open space should be contiguous, when feasible, not isolated fragments.

Stormwater Drainage and Environmental Issues

The general tenor of many of these comments indicated the importance of drainage standards and stream protection issues. In addition to the standards-related comments below, we heard many comments about the review timing for stormwater and drainage. While many indicated that stormwater review should remain earlier in the overall project review process, some wanted this review to occur later in the site plan (TRC) review.

- Stormwater/Stream corridors being impacted/deteriorated by development
- Open drainage channels standards are very restrictive. Give the developer a little flexibility to allow them to move things around on the site. Allow them to adjust the width of the easement to allow future maintenance (eg. Deep pipe that can't be fixed because the maintenance easement is too narrow).
- Need to require developers to look at the cumulative impacts of a project. (e.g. combining 5 lots to create one apartment building and the existing drainage can't handle it).
- Should there be additional language that requires developer participation in a regional drainage system?

Tree preservation, the clearing of sites (clear cutting), and environmental protection were mentioned repeatedly. Staff, neighborhood representatives, and environmental representatives expressed an opinion that standards and procedures need to be updated to address these concerns.

- Think of environmental features of the site and design earlier (referring to tree protection and drainage).
- Filling of low lands should be more closely regulated/avoided.
- Need local standards for stream buffers for perennial streams for streams not covered under State regs.
- Clear cutting problems with single-family developments.
- Tree mass is threatened; relates to purification of air.

Streets, Sidewalks, and Connectivity

Concurrent with this LDO rewrite, the City is creating new street standards. Many of the comments heard during the interview sessions should be incorporated into that analysis. Street widths were brought up regularly, with divergent opinions. Some want wider streets, and some want narrower ones. There was some agreement that reduced street widths could be traded for other improvements, such as installing fire suppression systems in buildings.

- The intent of street character should be described.
- Street and sidewalk standards are overkill
- Clearly defined cross-walks also are needed, for safety.
- Utility easements: have grown; how do they fit within the streetscape?
- High Point has a much better turn-lane requirement.
- The size of trash trucks is an issue. Need another way to collect trash where streets or alleys are narrow.
- At some point, the alley designation was dropped from the city's standards. (It is presently difficult to create a new one?) This should be reintroduced.

There are a number of opinions on connectivity. Some questioned the need for connectivity requirements, indicating a market preference for limiting access, while others stressed the need for more connectivity to provide easier access for public services and promote connection between neighborhoods.

- Connectivity: Why should this be required? Is there any flexibility?
- Connecting "nodes" of development: How is this accomplished? It is understood that this is to reduce the distance traveled, but what if the project is phased?
- "Connectivity" is an issue. Policies call for it, but there is resistance from some neighborhoods and developers. Socio-economic segregation is a part of the concern.
- Don't ban cul-de-sacs completely. That is too restrictive. Buyers like them, and abutting, established neighborhoods sometimes fear the increased traffic.
- The City needs a new Connectivity policy.
- Consider providing pedestrian connections and emergency access links even when connecting cul-desacts for autos is not achievable.
- If neighborhoods lack connectivity, this hinders response time, and also because the arterial streets are loaded with traffic.

There was fairly broad support for sidewalks, although some mentioned the increased cost of development. Sidewalk connectivity was repeated frequently.

- Sidewalks should be located all over the City. Wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs.
- Connections to sports field and trails also should be required, to encourage their use.
- A sidewalk master plan is needed, to indicate where they should occur.
- A process for handling incremental construction of sidewalks is needed. (Performance period/bond?)
- Sidewalk continuity should be a requirement; many are intermittent. Consider phased or in lieuprograms?

Subdivision Design

There were a number of comments raised relating to the actual design of a subdivision. The range of comments indicates a fairly broad perspective that the new Ordinance will need to address.

- Want to see more greenspace incorporated into a development.
- Open space/parkland dedication requirements—opposed to increasing unless there are incentives for doing so—density, etc..., relaxation of set backs, parking reductions, street widths, type of curb and gutter, pipe types, think globally.
- Regional stormwater ponds (natural looking). Watershed planning with developer contributions.

Representatives from regional utility providers had a number of comments relating to the challenges they face when trying to coordinate with the current regulations. It is apparent that there needs to be further discussion between the City and the utility providers to ensure that the new regulations balance the installation and maintenance needs of utilities with other design and operational considerations.

- Need to plan ahead for utilities when designing and locating landscape (tree) plantings.
- Duke Power would like to see different standards for regular street lighting ordinance and residential lighting
- Utility companies would like to see easements shown on maps as part of TRC on subdivision/zoning maps, etc.
- Underground utilities hard to do in some cases (e.g. Elmsley Square).
- Utility companies need to preserve the wide easement (currently 30'). All utility companies can't always use the same trench.

General Document Updates

These items can be considered the "laundry list" of what people want to see in the new ordinance. Many of the comments relate to document usability or organization.

- The form of the current Greensboro code is good; we understand how to use it. In some cases, the rules should be clearer, though.
- Cross-referencing: In some cases, there is too much of it; perhaps reorganize portions, use more tables.
- More tables should be provided in the code.
- Need illustrative sketches to demonstrate interpretation of the code.
- Use standard terms that the community is used to.
- Manufacturing and Industrial uses section of the permitted use table. Impossible to use if they don't have an SIC code. Use classification approach-more of a description of the use rather than codes.

Complete List of Stakeholder Comments

Comments not included in the Key Recommendations section are located in the following pages. *Italics* indicate a direct comment.

Overall Philosophy and Approach

- Speaking for Concerned Citizens of N.E. Greensboro- want more neighborhood amenities and retail in the area. Ordinance shouldn't get in the way. Have to travel too far to get to a drug store.
- After preliminary plat and construction plans are approved-Building Inspections is allowing a "reasonable amount" of model homes to be built. Be a little more specific about how many homes can be built
- Don't like the current approach that the City doesn't extend water/sewer past the lakes.
- Want higher minimum thresholds for requiring a Comp. Plan amendment (was 10 acres, now all go through amendment process). Feel like that is a double-rezoning process. Exclude projects with minor impacts.
- Building department gets good reviews because customer-supportive philosophy has been instilled by leadership
- Staff is not user-friendly...again...again...again
- UNCG master planning process included the community, and the conclusion was to go south of the railroad tracks.
- Require annexation for properties outside the City if they want city water/sewer.

Document Usability

- Regulations in multiple places streams in UDO, Ch 27 and 30 among other places
- Feeling that City departments don't even know where to go for information (e.g. an example of a person who wanted to open a small day care being sent from department to department because staff didn't know where to refer the person). Want one source of information.
- Sense that the "average Joe" is being taken advantage of. The small business owner or developer has to go through a more difficult review process than the applicant with a really big project.
- Local developers understand the system
- National developers need to have more of a one-stop shop and administrative guidelines.
- Struggling with unpredictable interpretation of the ordinance. Department heads have the ability to give a little more flexibility. The front line staff needs to have more confidence, authority to make decisions
- Too many cross-references. Would be easier to if all pertinent regulations were in one place.
- Sidewalk, street standards are in one place- waiver provisions are in another place. Infrastructure improvement requirements are in one place,
- Need an easier way to navigate (improved index).
- Nice to integrate building requirements, site requirements into the UDO.
- Give the developer a clear idea of what's expected up front. Clarify the submittal requirements.
- Current ordinance is one size fits all. Develop expedited review for minor subdivisions and single-family. Why do small developers get penalized.
- Accessory dwellings too hard to explain to people.

- Centerline setback too hard to explain. Look at other ways of addressing this (edge of ROW).
 Happens prior to rezoning.
- Hate the permitted use table (one realtor)- feels like it pigeon-holes development and makes it hard to develop. Discussion amongst the others- what else would you do?
- Index is not good.
- Some items are covered in multiple places in the ordinance (e.g. fences) you have to know its there.

General Document Updates

- Don't do a code like Raleigh's.
- Why does city keep doing continual text amendments when LDO is underway?
- Also provide clear intent and policy statements along with the prescriptive standards, to aid in evaluating alternative measures, variances, exceptions.
- Cross-referencing: There is too much, more should be consolidated. On the other hand, some references are needed. For example, if other permits are needed, reference those.
- Land clearing and billboard preservation are going to be lightning rods of this project.
- Want better organization of the ordinance, currently too difficult to find things.
- Minimize the changes to the ordinance to maintain consistency of language between the various jurisdictions.
- Need illustrations for ordinance
- Too many cross-references.
- Clear up definitions of bars and restaurants, billiard parlors.
- Change terminology for family care home- to group care home.
- Update definitions and index- What is a retaining wall?- is it a structure?
- What is a dumpster?
- Allow broader classifications of uses (not the current SIC code approach).

Right-Sizing

- Minimum setbacks should be different in established neighborhoods.
- One set of standards seem to apply both to infill in established neighborhoods and to new development in green fields. This is inappropriate.
- A committee tested the impacts of existing regulations on some older, established developments, and saw an average reduction in density of 20%, rather than an increase. (Presumably because of increased setbacks, lot coverage and landscape requirements.)
- Need to approach this project the same way the plan was done—different standards and approaches for different areas of the city; inner city; urban; suburban; rural areas

Incentives

- One incentive for preserving a large, historic house would be to permit some other uses, either by right, or as a conditional use. These other uses would not be tied to the land, but to the building. Therefore, if the historic structure were to be demolished, it would not trigger more non-conforming uses in the area.
- Need incentives/trade-offs for unusual lots.

- TOD- incentives for developers to encourage more public/private partnerships. More mixed uses around TODs (financial).
- Much discussion of incentives has occurred locally but they never go anywhere.
- Green building code. Give density credit for green buildings. Parking reductions? Closer to the river?

Performance-Based

- Need to explore "performance" as a measure as opposed to minimum standards—or follow the dual track approach that Nore Winter speaks of—Reedy Fork is example of performance—small lots in exchange for greenways and overall site planning details
- There should be a combination of "minimum" prescriptive standards and more performance-based standards that provide flexibility. Also add some special conditions that staff can identify and apply.
- More flexibility in the list of permitted uses, more emphasis on the impact of the proposed development. Performance-based and design based emphasis.
- Loading dock requirements- don't tie to building anymore. Just have performance provisions (screening/stay out of public streets).
- Need performance standards/guidelines for PUDs

Development Review and Procedures

- Need a minor modification process.
- Southside came to them informally (public safety)
- Although police and fire don't have a formal role at the review table, their interests are sometimes well represented
- Conditional use review is applied too often.
- City review is by multiple departments, with little coordination at a point where development can be adjusted, with authority among departments to negotiate.
- What takes precedence when two city standards are in conflict? Who decides?
- A preliminary review is needed. (Consider re-installing this step.)
- Some appeals go to the Planning Board; other actions go to Board of Adjustment (BofA).
- Planning Board needs more members (problems getting a quorum.)
- BofA hears setback appeals, typically.
- Support for dual track approach
- There is a large variance work load; this should be reduced.
- There are questions about multiple board reviews. (i.e. Planning, Zoning, Historic Preservation, Board of Adjustment.)
- Too many hoops to jump through- there should be a fixed responsibility for reviews, a clear point of final decision.
- Can boards talk to each other in a review process? What are the rules for this?
- Computer tracking of projects will make it easier.
- Remove the barriers to permitting.
- Frustrated by the [perceived] need for unanimous consent from the Council.
- Requirements for Certificate of Occupancy (C.O.) too stringent (couldn't get a C.O. when the grass wasn't growing off-season). Most banks won't close a loan with a temporary C.O.

- Movement to more standards in UDO and CU zoning were supposed to address their concerns but it didn't work
- Rezoning large subdivisions- should we identify land for schools/parks in new subdivisions?
- Residents should be able to learn about utility work in the neighborhood sooner.
- The interaction of multiple reviews should be studied. (How Historic Preservation, Planning, Zoning and BofA work together.)
- The Lindley Park Neighborhood Plan is a model for others. It helped everyone in reviewing projects.
- Make sure the UDO update is an inclusive revision process.
- Development review process is broken. Why not have a metro-planning commission to cover areas within the growth boundary? Joint jurisdictional review process.
- Integrated policy for understanding the cumulative impacts of new facility provisions and new developments.
- Want more public education about the rezoning process.
- Need more equity in the approval process. Big developer always has an easier time than the little guy.
- Need better information. Who do you go to for enforcement? Who should you call?
- Need a clear process for interpretation of the ordinance.
- Need project advocates (ombudsman) on staff to shepherd a project through. One voice that can speak for the City during a review (instead of having to check with all the different departments).
- Better communication/notification of citizens during rezonings (bigger rezoning signs erected earlier in the approvals process). Citizens don't find out about things until too late.
- Addressing- assign addresses on review plans. Require engineers to put addresses on plans (not currently required). Require engineers to let addressing know that numbers have changed (typically townhouses, condos are the plan).
- Change process terminology to ensure consistency.
- Give more administrative authority to staff to make minor changes.
- The current practice of not taking some things to Council unless appealed is good
- Conducting due diligence is difficult, because of the number of departments that have to comment.
- Building Inspection, by contrast, is a model; they help to solve problems.
- Even projects that the city has stated are high priority are delayed by the process (HOPE VI, for example).
- Consider having a general review up front, and then the detailed review later on in the process. Twostage review process- Planning phase and then construction phase.
- Constraints established up front. Final design details in construction and utility plan.
- Front end review too rushed (Stormwater) move to later in the review process.
- Might be an opportunity for developers to come through and get preliminary approval and then complain later and be able slide through with projects that don't meet the new requirements.
- Easements: Utilities like (30-6-13.6 d2) "Free and Clear" easement clause
- Utility companies would like to see easements back on maps as part of TRC on zoning maps, etc.

Technical Review Committee (TRC)

- Police has no formal role in plan/tech review
- TRC is badly broken; not being used properly

- High Point's TRC is good model
- Too many people reviewing plans and no arbitrator—14 sets of plans required.
- TRC process results in construction plans not preliminaries
- Not great hope for TRC revamp
- Clarify what TRC actually does (doesn't actually grant a permit).
- It isn't clear what the requirements are for applicants to submit an application to TRC.
- Identify the roles of the TRC in the LDO. Include a checklist of what TRC requires.
- Need to clarify that clearing TRC doesn't mean that you have a building permit.
- Involved in TRC—fire access, hydrants, etc.,
- High Point and Winston-Salem have better TRC process
- TRC requirements are too detailed and fragmented in their review.
- Utility issues should be addressed early enough in the design stage to work these (easement) issues out, preferably prior to TRC sign off.
- It would be helpful if the Ordinance required earlier communication with utility companies to work utility easement issues out.
- Administrative utility review process with TRC to say get utility OK with easements before going thru TRC Utilities need to catch problems earlier in the process.

Rezoning

- Too much reliance on conditional use zoning—has become a negotiating tool between developer
- Some conditions are common to CU rezonings- incorporate into the general standards.
- Architects and engineers feel that zoning changes are opposed by neighborhoods. The process needs to be more predictable.
- If a house is presently divided into apartments and the owner seeks to have them individually metered, this is interpreted as requiring a re-zoning to multifamily. Is this appropriate?
- Re-zoning is difficult; neighbors object.
- City-initiated rezonings per plan are wrong

Districts

- Support for collapsing districts
- Consider fewer zoning districts with more flexibility.
- There are too many zoning classifications; they should be consolidated.
- The criteria for the TN district: seems to be subjective.
- Industrial zoning/land use standards are fine.
- Institutional standards are fine.
- Allow limited retail along certain corridors in industrial areas.
- Changes to CBD boundaries. Especially to the south.
- A new zone category that addresses the "transitional" area around the downtown is needed. Presently, the TN option is the only tool, and it doesn't always work.
- Transitional zones are needed around the downtown, to step down the density, and provide a mix of uses.

- In the historic district, the HPC has supported applications to BofA for special exceptions to setbacks or minimum lot size when the proposed project would be compatible with the context. Some of this should be a "by right" condition, or one that can be determined administratively.
- Industrial and Manufacturing- near transportation and away from residential. Look at buffering standards.
- Planning feels that neighborhood commercial needs to be revisited. Regulations aren't working.
- Shopping center zoning districts- need to limit outdoor display and storage.
- Residential zones should not distinguish between attached and detached products. Instead, they should focus on density.
- Look at Cary's performance industrial zone.
- Big projects with long build-outs are difficult because PUD and CU zoning lock you in.

Infill Redevelopment and Reinvestment

- High Point road is ripe for redevelopment, but it's very stigmatized—homelessness and seedy
- Zoning is at odds with desire for mixed-use and infill
- Market is not strong for neo-trad; some support for mixed use and infill
- Difficult to do "on-street" back-out parking which is important to ped-oriented places
- Infill needs to be in character with the context.
- Reduced setbacks are needed in some cases, especially on older, smaller infill lots.
- Infill and redevelopment is difficult under existing ordinance
- Ordinance is setup for greenfields; doesn't work well for infill
- PD-I—infill is very flexibile, but small—need to address project in between Reedy Forks and PD-I
- Would like to see neighborhood commercial within residential classifications
- Encourage downtown development with incentives. Make sure the ordinance doesn't get in the way.
- Need more architectural/streetscape consideration in the downtown. Have a lot of flexibility in the downtown- do we want more control/guidelines to allow creativity. Too tight and you stifle investment.
- "Infill is wonderful." It reduces sprawl, reduces vehicle miles traveled.
- The "appropriate location" for infill should be defined. Criteria are needed for this.
- Some substandard lots could be made developable by right, with appropriate standards.
- Also consider senior friendly designs, assisted living prototypes for established neighborhoods, and within transitional areas, close to downtown, not just in greenfields. (It again promotes interaction and activity.)
- Reward infill and reuse of urban sites.
- Need zoning ordinances that allow reinvestment/improvement of older properties
- TND works close-in, but not in farm fields
- Infill of existing lots- requiring upsizing, moving of utilities, and looping of water lines to meet existing design requirements. Utilities are reaching the end of their existing lifespan.
- No real grey fields development has occurred.
- 30-6-13.6d Utility Easements (width and location) Infill seems to want to shrink the easement and that is getting too tight. Alleys help in urban areas.

Mixed-Use Development

- There's much room in the middle between single-use sprawl and vertical mixed-use
- Need to focus on removing things from ordinance not adding; will help support density and mixeduse
- Neighborhoods need to see good models of convenience stores. They resist them, because their experience has been negative.
- The Comprehensive Plan calls for a lot of mixed use; is this realistic? Is the market really here for this?
- What was the logic behind mixed use? What was the intent?
- Go to Elam and Walker
- Won't be able to get neighborhood commercial if you need to rezoning because neighbors will fight
- Southern Village in Chapel Hill—grocery and nonres are subsidized
- Greensboro got started down the mixed-use street with the water and sewer issues, but it turns out there's not an immediate crisis
- Health care should also be within walking distance. Mixed use categories should permit health care uses.
- Need mixed use to be designed to be compatible with the neighborhood, including mass, scale, orientation to the street.
- Mixed-use must be appropriate to the context (e.g. historic districts).
- Land use conflicts (Commercial—Residential)
- Not big support for mixed-use development
- Lindley Park NH commercial (Spring Hill) is not that well liked by N'hood
- Mixed use development-overhaul the districts.
- Have to PUD to do mixed housing types, which is very cumbersome

Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND)

- Don't like Huntersville, Cornelius, Raleigh or Chapel Hill ordinance—hate Durham's landscape/screening
- Meadowmont (Chapel Garden) new TND worth looking at.
- TND—don't force, but make sure to accommodate because market will come around because of affordability factor
- Others say TND doesn't mean affordable; more of a lifestyle decision

Housing Types

- Don't distinguish between attached and detached; just regulate based on units per acre.
- Multi-family requirements are too onerous. Projects become too expensive and review takes too long.
- Commercial approvals are far more cumbersome than residential.
- Can accessory apartments be created? As alley units?
- Alley units: should be permitted. Questions are: Do alley lane widths meet minimum access standards for emergency response vehicles and trash removal? Can alley structures be set in from the alley edge, such that a parking space is provided? Can smaller trash trucks be used?
- Consider more clustering and smaller lots in exchange for more open space
- Want to allow duplexes in single-family by right. Do we want to do this in all districts?

- Accessory dwelling units. Max. size vs. 50% rule confusing people.
- *Market is warming to townhouse product* [higher density].
- You must use a PUD to have a mix of townhouses and single family.

Neighborhood Protection

- Concerned about impact of infill development on neighborhoods. New buildings/uses should be compatible with the neighborhood.
- Need neighborhood plans/local area plans to protect residential neighborhoods.
- Compatibility standards are important for areas that don't have other area-specific standards.

Historic Preservation

- Historic preservation districts can be over-restrictive. Need to have more of a balance between creativity and restrictions. Elm Street going south (over Washington St.).
- Understand that the buildings need to match the intended users- need to have change and understand that evolution is a reality.
- City needs a comprehensive survey of historic properties.
- Put a staff person/people in charge of mitigating the destruction of neighborhoods through demolition. Feel that a demolition permit is granted on request.
- City comments omit preservation concerns in rezoning cases and the burden has been on the County to deal with preservation issues.
- City has not funded demolition by neglect (unfunded mandate)- poor inspection and follow-up. Improve process.

Design

- Neo-traditional development is not the only way to develop. It should be an option, but not a requirement.
- More design control over commercial/retail- less regulation of use.
- Treatment of parking, porches should be addressed.
- Universality of design. Adequate mobility for seniors in the design of projects.
- Context-based design process for areas that don't have formal design standards.
- Good quality design can help different scale of building and different land uses fit in.
- Review list of permitted encroachments.
- Support for Community Policing through Environmental Design (CPTED) among police.
- Need side street lighting.
- Decorative light standards don't seem practical. Currently, decorative lights on both sides of street every 100 feet. (check standards)
- Types of Street lighting 30-5-1.1- Current UDO is not what utility companies recommend using.
- Duke Power moving towards dark skies regulations with cut off fixtures. No longer the NEMA fixture, NEMA is a light trespass fixture
- Current ordinance mandates no light trespass on adjacent properties but this is not enforced.
- Duke Power does have some limited decorative lighting options
- Duke Power would like to see different standards for regular street lighting ordinance and residential lighting

Triangulation

- Building triangle controls are outdated and cumbersome; should go away
- Residential doesn't need the "triangularization"
- The "triangulation" rule needs to be reviewed.

Parks, Open Space, and Greenways

- Sidewalks should not be considered a substitute for a trail. They serve different users.
- Pedestrian-friendly greenways needed all over town.
- Greenways should be a requirement.
- Parks and Recreation Department is updating the parkland plan.
- Preservation of open space in rural areas important.
- Put the Green back in Greensboro. Adams Farm has a lot of green space and buffering.
- Conservation overlays should be considered as an option.
- More parks and open space. Re-greening of City. More tree canopy. Protect existing parks and expand with new growth.

Environment

- Stream bank buffers/filters should be provided.
- Soil erosion prevention is needed.
- Don't allow clearcutting lots before they sell.
- What to do with non-mapped (non-regulated) streams in existing tracts.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

- TDR or wetlands banking because the amount of "good land" left is shrinking. Let the developer improve the site and buy off-site parkland in exchange.
- Consider Transfer of Development Rights from outlying areas into the core (recognizing the resistance by property owners).

Landscaping

- Tree ordinance: revisions are good; city-based process; a model.
- Durham's ordinance is not good for trees.
- Design flexibility for landscaping is needed: it is now too restrictive. One simplistic planting formula; doesn't permit mixing.
- Tree and landscape regs are good but need to be more flexible or promote more variety
- Landscape requirements: seem to have rigid, "one size" standards; there should be more flexibility to mix and match among trees, shrubs, etc.
- Not much complaint about landscaping in general. There are problems with clear cutting.
- Need a waiver for landscaping requirements during the off season.
- Replacement requirements for trees should be increased (number, size, density of the replacement)
- The tree canopy is important to preserve.
- Clear site triangles- to an extent. Don't make owners take down too many trees/bushes.

- Problems with trees growing into power lines. There are compatible trees with power lines. Utilities will share list.
- Boring around trees is more expensive than trenching. Greensboro doesn't currently require boring.
- Move the street trees back from utility easements. Trees should not interfere with easements.
- Screening around transformer box should allow good access without hurting vegetation. Need 10' (clear) on one side and 3' (clear) on other sides.

Flexibility

- Flexibility with some of the standards (e.g. requirements for sidewalks/ street improvements near Citicard.)
- People asking for variances of fence height along street on corner lots 4 feet vs. 6 feet.
- Review how strict/flexible conditions will be.
- Consider alternate review process to going through the entire Planning Board, then City Council review.

Enforcement

- Feel that there is an unfair application of the regulations. The small guy is subject to the most restrictions. Larger developers can work the system.
- Need to make sure the PUD agreements are being respected. People feel like the developer is not following the agreement. Make sure that the PUD agreement has the necessary specificity to regulate development.
- Enforce laws currently on the books before creating new ones.
- Enforcement of housing maintenance is an issue.
- Demolition by neglect is a concern. Enforcement needs to be well-staffed.
- Better enforcement of current regulations
- Code enforcement (Fire) multi and commercial
- Enforcement of noise ordinance is a source of frustration
- Having problems with condo developments not posting street numbers where they are visible from the street.
- Enforcement of regulations when someone brings a spec building in (PARKING requirements). Review design standards for spec buildings and parking.

Land Use

- Use trip generation rates by type of use to calculate traffic impact.
- Summit Avenue has the wrong zoning (Currently business-follow up on this?)
- Convenience stores are magnet for criminal activity; other land uses can be problematic.

Large-scale Commercial

- Want some good big-box regulations to address the end-life of a big box. K-Mart on Market Street. Parking lot requirements that anticipate redevelopment of the site as something else [parking lots should reflect existing street patterns or allow easy conversion to a street grid].
- Big box by Granite near Wendover perceived to be a nice project.

Airport

- Noise contours- make sure zoning ordinance anticipates development around the airport in general. People are still building houses and subdivisions near the airport.
- Noise cone at the airport. How will the ordinance control the zoning near the airport. Zoning needs to consider the implications.
- High Point needs another access point to the airport.
- Concern that the City is contracting the noise cone north of the airport.

Nonconforming Uses

- What is grandfathered? What is not grandfathered?
- Non-conforming use provisions: Re-study what makes a non-conforming use, and what can be done with/to it. Could some specific non-conforming uses be redeveloped/expanded through a "conditional" process that is handled administratively? (How would neighborhood concerns be addressed?)
- There seems to be a rule that, if a house is increased in size by more than 50%, then it must be brought up to full compliance with the zoning regulations. This should be studied.
- Reexamine non-conforming uses and modernizing.

Parking Standards

- Parking lots should be landscaped and located so they aren't the first thing you see. Don't want them abutting their house or back yard.
- Parking requirements: confusion about reduced formula for mixed use... does it work?
- Parking standards have improved but still have ways to go—e.g., medical office parking---need graduated approach as in Winston
- Parking: Can there be reductions; how to address requirements for non-conforming uses in an established neighborhood?
- Some parking paving should be porous, to reduce run-off.
- Off street parking standards ok.
- Current ordinance requires too many parking spaces for high schools (elementary works).
- Consider giving credit for on street parking.
- Alleys and rear access/parking can add up to 20% to development costs

Connectivity

- Cross-access in parking lots to reduce on-street traffic.
- Connectivity is an issue for emergency services.
- Single entry single access developments are a concern for emergency services.
- Police don't want connectivity
- Connectivity policy is misguided, as is prohibition on cul-de-sac

Sidewalks

- Stick with the sidewalks (understanding that cost is an issue).
- Sidewalks should be installed everywhere.
- Filling in gaps in sidewalk system is needed.

- Need clear criteria for where sidewalks should be located.
- Sidewalks are essential for healthy communities; in larger cities with higher densities, people walk more and are healthier.
- Sidewalks are also important for safety of children in neighborhoods. There are fewer pedestrian/auto accidents where they exist.
- Some neighborhoods have no sidewalk, and the owners resist retrofitting, but this then contributes to the dominance of the automobile, because there are no safe alternatives.

Streets

- Emergency response times are a key concern. This relates to the obstacles or congestion that may be on streets. That is, street widths, the presence of on-street parking, and the volumes of traffic.
- Roads and transportation plans are also a police concern.
- The Fire Marshal's standards for streets, alley widths are an issue. (Some part not adopted?)
- Street requirements that don't allow dead end streets.
- Traffic controls based on traffic levels, not just after a fatality.
- Street widths are a concern
- They're willing to "horse trade" street widths in exchange for high level of structure protection
- Police and Fire departments are of two minds on skinny streets
- Construction entrances for new developments. Think about impact on existing neighborhoods.

Stormwater

- Stormwater management is driving too much up-front detail in plans
- Concern about the concept of moving stormwater review to the end of the TRC process. Need to keep review of stormwater ponds early in the process.
- Stormwater regulations are prescriptive. In some cases, an individual property or development is required to provide detention that really should be handled at a neighborhood, or block level.
- Existing stormwater: two stage review.
- Need the ability require a private maintenance easement for properties where the drainage generates less than 5 cubic feet per second so that the drainage area doesn't get filled in/developed.
- When calculating runoff for design drainage maintenance width. Clarify which storm interval should be used (10 year for underground/100-year for above ground).
- Incorporate setback policy for easements- get language from staff..

Water/Sewer

- Water and sewer works pretty well as it is.
- The City/County water and sewer agreement with Guilford County was adopted in 1968 and doesn't work anymore.

Utilities

• 30-6-13 Subdivision Standards: Neighborhood District Section- Reads that the electric must run along the rear property lines — this is antiquated by today's standards. Utility companies have problems with fences, trees needing trimming, and the homeowners not wanting equipment and workers in their backyards

- Electric service is now installed in the front of the property. It is more accessible and practical.
- 30-6-13.6c Underground Utilities: Interpretation is sometimes a problem, especially when defining "within a subdivision."
- Shrinking setbacks are infringing on utility easements (e.g. Reedy Fork-townhomes with a 12' setback utilities can't fit in these setbacks). The side yards are getting too tight as well.
- We may need to start thinking about how we can accommodate utilities in higher density areas (urban) e.g. Southside.
- We need to decide where the utilities need to be designed to go. Front and/or back need to leave options to fit different designs

Signs

- Need more creativity with the sign ordinance (can't legislate good taste). No garbage A-frame signs on the streets.
- Clarification of signs for churches and schools.
- Standardize the way sign dimensions are calculated (5 different people doing it five different ways).
- Too many zoning districts for signs?
- Projecting wall signs allow them anywhere? Consider allowing in pedestrian scale areas.

Growth

- The constraint now is the growing number of jurisdictions in the way of city's possible growth
- How can we impose development standards on land outside the city's jurisdictions
- Fire is concerned about growth management because of response times
- Emergency services are negatively impacted by satellite annexations
- Sprawl negatively affects Police

Market Forces

- Citizens are still very conservative on land use and planning matters; not yuppies
- Granite development at US 220 and Old Battleground? Good case study of market resistance

Transportation/Transit

- Bike parking also should be provided (racks).
- Public transportation is horrible- no regional plan (transportation or otherwise).
- Transportation along certain corridors. Congestion is stifling development and investment.
- Connectivity to transit is also important. There are cases where the disabled cannot reach a bus stop.
- Need more public transit
- Small buses/jitneys/alternatives to the big buses for public transit.
- Emphasis on public transportation and TOD
- Do we need to adjust setbacks from ramps for major thoroughfares? (consider reducing).

Elected and Appointed Officials

• Elected/appointed officials need more formal/regular training about zoning/subdivision standards and procedures before they make a decision.

• Bifurcated Planning Board/Zoning Commission adds time and complexity; city apparently recognizes this.

Comprehensive Plan/Planning

- Some development not in conformance with the comprehensive plan.
- Small Area Plans are helpful; they provide clarity for the developer and for existing neighborhood residents.
- Check out Smart Growth Report.
- Preserve Main Street Greensboro
- City doesn't know the impact that the universities are going to have on the surrounding community. Will it be converted to "block apartments".
- Need for long-range, mid-range, short range planning. PPBS (planning programs and budgeting systems). Integrate budgeting and planning.
- Don't have any formal process for integrating permits into Planning Department's growth and development projection models.
- Bellemeade Development Plan- preserve single family character.
- Capitalize on community assets. Promote activity centers: Ballpark; Military Park.
- Closer adherence to the Greensboro Tomorrow Activity Plan
- UNCG is not planning to expand toward College Park. Their enrollment is projected to grow to 15K-18K.
- UNCG planning pedestrian connections at the RR bridges.
- First, UNCG will construct parking lots, and hold this land for future building. They may also develop athletic fields there.
- UNCG also studying alternatives to parking.
- UNCG purchased the J.D. Wilkinson steel building and will be using that site (?)
- Guilford College has a 350 acre campus; they are beginning a strategic planning process. Little expansion is anticipated, although they do project enrollment increases of 30% by 2010.
- About half the Guilford students live on campus.
- Utilities should be involved in future comprehensive plan discussions so they can plan ahead for future infrastructure demands.

Miscellaneous

- Mega-churches- encroaching on neighborhoods.
- Enhanced floodplain rules- have some drafts ready to incorporate. New maps. Updated recommendations available.
- Standards for churches (and other institutional facilities?) are needed. Some are quite large and out of scale with the neighborhood.
- Dark skies should be considered.
- A child care center (?) purchased a residential lot behind it, demolished the house, and constructed a playground. (Is that appropriate? Is that considered a primary use?)
- A lot of non-conforming accessory structures- go back to 3 feet set back.
- 200 foot separation for bars and parks in the downtown area a problem.
- Streets should facilitate police monitoring.

- Like existing ordinance because we know it
- Taking the "U" out UDO is ok, because they're not unified anymore anyway
- Can you divide older single family house into two condominiums? (Although there are issues about loss of rental housing.)
- The city's water shortage motivated compact planning; now, that is not an issue.
- Developers did a study looking at development in Greensboro if all policies in Comprehensive Plan were implemented. Their before and after showed average 20% yield reduction
- Use of flag lots is being abused. Revisit this issue in the next Comp. Plan update.
- NO IMPACT FEES
- Took the county and municipalities five-years to develop the UDO.
- High Point Planning Department wants to be kept in the loop of the update process.
- Senior citizens loan program cut, need resources to be made available for property maintenance and improvements.
- Current rules require spacing of group living homes a minimum of 1/4 mile apart. This limits the choices for locating these facilities. Sometimes, they would benefit from being near each other. (On the other hand, other neighborhood representatives are concerned about these facilities being concentrated in one or two neighborhoods.)
- Higher density is both good and bad for Police
- Police tends to react as opposed to act proactively. They need more information before annexation so they can have input and plan ahead.
- Organize communities around anchor points
- Clarification on when you can use an IMUD?
- Want to have open/honest/candid discussions of the cost implications of changing the ordinance.
- Zoning Commission and Planning Board meetings take too long. Need more capable individuals serving on the boards.
- Very difficult to get phone calls returned from Planning Department. Only a couple of people who can provide answers.
- About 1/4 of UNCG students are housed on campus. Others live in the neighborhoods, generally within a two-mile radius.
- City gave up ETI zoning jurisdiction about 20 years.

Appendix

Stakeholder Interview Groups

Listed in alphabetical order.

- Banking and Financial Institutions
- Boards and Commissions
- City Council Members
- Colleges & Universities
- Commercial Developers
- Economic Development Interests (City and Private)
- Engineers and Architects
- Environmental Interests
- City of Greensboro Staff
 - o Engineering Department
 - o Environmental Services Department
 - o Fire Department
 - o Greensboro Department of Transportation
 - o Housing and Community Development
 - o Inspections Department
 - o Library Department
 - o Parks and Recreation Department
 - o Planning Department
 - o Police Department
 - o Water Resources
- Health Community
- Local Government Representatives
- Neighborhood Representatives
- Non-Profit Organizations
- Public Utilities (Bell South, Duke Power, PNG)
- Public Workshops/Open Houses (three)
- Real Estate & Attorneys
- Residential Developers